

**Town Council 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019**  
**Reports from Outside Organisations**  
**Agenda Item11**

At the last Internal meeting it was agreed that written reports would be accepted from representatives on outside organisations.

As Town Council meets bi-monthly it would be practical to report every 4 months. "Nil returns" when no meetings of the organisations have occurred, will be acceptable.

When the minutes are prepared following a Town Council meeting the representatives on those outside organisations who have not submitted a report will be notified that one is due for the next Town Council meeting.

**Proposal: Information item**



Phil Burgess  
Town Clerk

Impact on Crime and Disorder : None  
Impact on Bio-diversity : None  
Budgetary Impact : None

## Tenterden Town Council

### Representation on outside organisations

Report to the council meeting on 08 July 2019 by Cllr Justin Nelson

#### Civil Society Conference

**Background:** *This is an initiative established by three members of the public to encourage volunteer and community organisations in the town to communicate and liaise with each other, so the community as a whole can be better aware of what each organisation is doing from time to time, and to enable organisations to help each other and the town council. It should be noted that there is no governance structure at present (though a CIO may be formed). Organisations are invited to send representatives, and to invite others (especially younger members of the community) to attend the periodic conferences, in order to provide updates on their own activities, hear updates from other representatives, and to offer constructive suggestions.*

**Update:** The first conference was on 15 May, when those attending heard in particular about the proposed re-ordering of St Mildred's church, the re-ordering of the Town Hall, the re-ordering of and improvements to the Recreation Ground in Tenterden, the cinema project. The chamber of commerce expressed its support for the conference idea; mention was made of the Market Towns Initiative; suggestions for a name for the conference were invited; concerns were expressed about its sustainability. A copy of the organisers' feedback has been circulated to councillors by the Town Clerk.

At the second meeting, on 25 June, we received presentations from –

- Mark Ellender on the proposed Community Land Trust for Tenterden
- Graham Smith on the progress being made by the revived Tenterden Tigers football team
- Seren Welch on the Destination Management Plan
- Sue Ferguson on the Spirit of Tenterden event

The Civil Society conference organisers are planning to establish a CIO with a view to raising grant funds for joint projects – they reckon this will take 6 months to achieve. They have asked for suggestions for speakers and/or subjects for the next meeting, which they are planning for January

**Having attended these meetings, I do not feel it is appropriate to have a single councillor represent the town council: all councillors should be encouraged to attend and participate, as the subjects are of general interest.**

#### Tenterden CLT steering group

**Background:** *The steering group's aim is to explore the scope for establishing a Community Land Trust (CLT) for Tenterden; the aim of the CLT would be to explore and implement ways of meeting affordable housing needs in the community in perpetuity. Apart from its terms of reference, the steering group has – and needs – no governance. Its website is at [www.tenterdenclt.org](http://www.tenterdenclt.org)*

**Update:** The town council has decided to defer any decision by it as to whether it should continue to be represented on the steering group. However, the steering group itself has prepared a report, responding to the comments made about it at the Annual Council Meeting, and this report has been circulated to all councillors. The steering group held a pre-launch meeting on 26 June to which councillors were invited to attend to raise any questions or concerns they may have had; six councillors did attend and were able, with the other attendees, to ask questions, clarify points and express views

## **Tenterden & District Chamber of Commerce**

**Background:** *The chamber of commerce is a community interest company, TDCC Limited. Its committee meets monthly, there are 6-weekly liaison meeting with the Town Clerk, monthly networking meetings/workshop sessions, and other activities from time to time. Its website is at [www.tenterdenchamber.org](http://www.tenterdenchamber.org)*

**Update:** The chamber's AGM was held on 04 June. The minutes have been circulated to councillors. I did not attend that last TDCC committee meeting, as I was abroad, but the committee is pursuing various options for increasing the chamber's activities.

Its most recent networking meeting will have been on 02 July at the Town Hall when the Theis & Khan will be presenting their ideas for re-ordering the Town Hall, but this note has been written before then.

## **Tenterden Leisure Centre Trust**

**Background:** *The trust is a limited company, Tenterden Leisure Centre Trust Limited (company number 04457980) and a registered charity (number 1103179). Its constitution provides for the town council to nominate two councillors to act as trustees, the chamber of commerce, Ashford Borough Council and the leisure centre's users' group each to nominate one and for up to nine other trustees to be elected by the board of trustees. Meetings are attended by relevant borough council officers, one of whom is the company secretary for the trust. The operational structure is not simple: the freehold interest in the site of the leisure centre is owned by the town council, who leased it to the borough council, who built the leisure centre and sub-leased it (but not the car parks) to the trust, who operate it via the medium of a management company. It has a page on the leisure centre's website: [https://www.tenterdenleisure.com/tenterden/ABOUT Trust](https://www.tenterdenleisure.com/tenterden/ABOUT_Trust)*

**Update:** Currently, there is only one town councillor trustee and one chamber of commerce trustee, with no trustees nominated by Ashford Borough Council (which instead nominates a councillor to be a representative only) or by the users' group (as no users' group now exists). There are four non-representative trustees, and more are sought. The trust has started the process of procuring a new management contract in readiness for the expiry at the end of March 2021 of the current contract. The trust has recruited a consultant to advise and assist it throughout the process of procuring the new management company – which may be the same as the existing one, depending on the outcome of the procurement process. One option that should be mentioned is the possibility of the borough council contracting direct with the successful management company, simplifying the operational structure and making the trust redundant. In parallel, we are liaising with other leisure centres in Kent who use the same manager, with a view to comparing notes and experiences and offering mutual support.

## **Tenterden area cycling strategy steering group**

**Background:** *The steering group is an ad hoc group of local residents interested in improving the cycling (and walking) facilities in and around Tenterden. It has no formal structure or governance and meets on an ad hoc basis to discuss and promote suitable suggestions for improvement. Its ambitions were given a huge boost by the production in July 2018 of a report by Sustrans on the existing and potential walking and cycling facilities in Tenterden, commissioned by the borough council as part of the county council's "Kent Town Audits" programme. The report has been welcomed wholeheartedly by the steering group, subject to some suggestions for better improvements.*

**Update:** All but one of these suggestions were relatively minor and, when passed on to Sustrans for comment, were answered and no longer apply. The exception was in respect of the extension of the

existing cycle route that runs from Grange Road, behind Henley Meadows, Colonel Stevens Way and Homewood School and ends at Drury Road: the route from there is suggested in the report as being up Haffenden Road (or through the twitten to Wells Close) then along Turners Avenue and Eastwell Barn Mews, then (a) down Turners Field to cross the railway line, go through the station industrial estate, back across the railway at the level crossing, then up Church Path to Church Road or (b) across Glebe Field to Church Road.

The steering group unanimously preferred a route that extended from the current end of the cycle route just short of Drury Road, along the edge of the fields on the far side of the railway track to reach the station industrial estate, then over the level crossing and up Combe Lane/Station Road cemetery to the Station Road car park (and the soon-to-be developed toilet block there). This was supported by the then borough portfolio holder for Culture, as well as the borough council's Community Project Manager and also the officer responsible for drawing up the council's new walking and cycling strategy. It was and is accepted that there are significant technical and financial obstacles to overcome, but that these should be investigated and addressed.

Initially, the response from Sustrans was to refuse to enter into discussions. However, as a result of persuasion by the borough council's officers, the Sustrans officer attended a further walk along the preferred extension route on 27 June, and is willing to assess its feasibility. The route walked was a "field edge" route, and the Sustrans officer wants also to walk along the railway cutting from Tenterden Town station to Drury Road, to see whether that might be a more viable option, and I am seeking consent from K&ESR for him to do this.

Justin Nelson: 27 June 2019